

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029**

Interested Parties

August 22, 2003

Enclosed for your review are the draft versions of the Fiscal Year 2003 Intended Use Plan (IUP) and the Fiscal Year 2003 Project Priority List (PPL) for the District of Columbia with regard to proposed drinking water improvements to be funded under the Safe Drinking Water Act. We are requesting your comments, if any, on the both documents.

As background, the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments of 1996 established a State Revolving Fund (SRF) to assist public drinking water systems in updating and improving their infrastructures. These funds will be awarded in the District of Columbia as grants instead of loans.

In order to determine the best use of Federal funds, these two documents are developed to evaluate and rank proposed projects and describe what projects will be funded during the current fiscal year. The PPL ranks projects based on health, regulatory, reliability, safety, and environmental issues giving various points in each category. This is in keeping with the Project Priority Rating System developed jointly by Region III, the Environmental Health Administration (EHA), and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) for evaluating the District of Columbia drinking water projects. This system is used to place and rank projects on the PPL in accordance with the rating criteria. The highest rated projects are at the top of the list followed by the lower rated ones in ranking order. The PPL spans a greater time period, generally five or so years, and presents a long term strategy while the IUP focuses only on how funds will be expended during the current fiscal year.

This year, the draft Fiscal Year 2003 IUP identifies four projects proposed for Federal funding. A proposed grant increase is requested to fund the continuing construction work at the Bryant Street Pumping Station (FS-993816-02) since sufficient funds were unavailable at the time of the initial grant offer. This increase will bring the grant level to full entitlement. Although the Bryant Street Pumping Station Project is not on the current PPL, it can nevertheless be funded since it is a continuation of an existing project whose need was justified previously and it remains a high priority.

Three new projects on the draft IUP are also proposed for funding: namely, Large Valve Replacement - Contract No. 6 (FS-993812-04), Small Valve Replacement - Contract No. 4 (FS-993811-02), and Dead End Elimination - Contract No. 2 (FS-993807-02). The two valve replacement projects represent an ongoing effort by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) to replace old and defective valves in order to facilitate the proper operation and maintenance of the system. The other project, the elimination of 140 dead ends is being undertaken to lessen the potential for stagnant water to collect in the lines.



The highest project on this year's draft PPL is the Lead Service Line Replacement Project. Recent sampling has indicated elevated lead levels at various locations within the District that necessitate corrective measures. Accordingly, the remediation of these lines on a system-wide basis will be accomplished over a 14-year period at a system correction rate of 7 percent per year. Being committed to this program, WASA has already begun work on the program's first year percentage goal, targeting the worst areas, in advance of any Federal funds.

Consequently, the projects to be funded this fiscal year are listed at 2, 3, and 8 on the PPL. WASA is using its own funds for this year's lead service line replacement program, being first on the list, as well as for the design of projects listed at 4, 5, 6, and 7. These designs are necessary to allow WASA to fund their construction as scheduled in future years.

The available Federal funds for fiscal year 2003 will only accommodate the four specified projects. Therefore, barring unforeseen circumstances, it is unlikely that any new projects listed on the draft PPL will be funded this fiscal year. Nevertheless, if funding is not made available for one or more projects, then projects may be selected from the PPL in order of priority using the criteria described in the IUP.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is soliciting public comment on the enclosed draft Fiscal Year 2003 IUP and the draft Project Priority List (PPL) through this mailing. A public hearing will be held only if significant concerns are expressed. If you have any concerns with or objections to the IUP or PPL, please notify me in writing within 30 days of the date of this letter. Please feel free to call Mr. Kenneth Pantuck at (215) 814-5769 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Victoria P. Binetti  
Associate Director for  
Municipal Assistance  
Water Protection Division

Enclosures